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THREE NEW LOCATIONS FOUND WITH MOBILE SCANNER VAN

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will address three areas of excess radiation recently found in the Boroughs of East Lansdowne and Lansdowne, Delaware County, Pennsylvania. The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a federal health agency, will issue a Public Health Consultation based on the new findings.

EPA recently used a mobile radiation scanner van from its Office of Radiation Programs in Las Vegas, Nevada, to look for radioactive mine tailings (residue) associated with the Austin Avenue Radiation Site in the Borough of Lansdowne.

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- A section of sidewalk at 11 East Greenwood Avenue, Lansdowne will be removed due to excess radiation. ATSDR recommends restricting access to children who live, and therefore, would normally play at this location. There is no immediate risk to people walking past this spot, which will be barricaded.

- Mortar in the exterior wall of a residential care facility at 236 Melrose Avenue, East Lansdowne, will be addressed after further study. ATSDR says excess radiation there can be isolated. Workers in a restricted interior area would not be exposed to radiation levels above recommended annual limits.

- The occupants of a home at 34 Lewis Avenue, East Lansdowne, will be relocated based on ATSDR's recommendation. Radiation levels there are eight times the recommended exposure limits and radon levels are 25 times above EPA's action level.

Work at the Austin Avenue Radiation Site has been focused in and around a house at 133 Austin Avenue. The house is adjacent to an old warehouse at 36 South Union Avenue where radium processing occurred between 1915 and 1922. The warehouse is related to the Lansdowne Radiation site which was listed on the National Priorities List (NPL).

In 1986, EPA and PADER surveyed the warehouse and determined that radiation levels there did not warrant a cleanup effort at that time. Owners of the warehouse were ordered in 1988 not to renovate the structure without prior notice to PADER.

In 1990, a private citizen contacted PADER and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), requesting further testing at 133 Austin Avenue. Once granted access and finding elevated radon and radium levels, PADER notified EPA. In October, EPA's structural engineering assessment called for the warehouse to be stabilized and dismantled, based on structural deficiencies.

ATSDR's recent Public Health Advisory will allow EPA to process the site on an expedited basis. The NPL is EPA's list of 1,200 top priority abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The sites are being cleaned up under the authorization of the Comprehensive Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund), as amended.

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